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Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 166328

EXDIS, FOR AMB. YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT GABORONE 2013 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO
DAR ES SALAAM, LAGOS, LONDON, LUSAKA, MAPUTO AND PRETORIA
JUN 28.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 2013

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PDEV RH BC
SUBJ: RHODESIA: VIOLENCE AGAINST UNARMED CIVILIANS

REF: STATE 164007

1. OUR FIRST REACTION IS TO RECALL THAT BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT HAS CONFRONTED PROBLEM OUTLINED REFTEL FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS AND TO REVIEW WHAT GOB HAS DONE ABOUT IT FOR POSSIBLE GUIDE-LINES IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS OF WHETHER, WHEN AND HOW US CAN MAKE EFFECTIVE ITS POSITION ON SUCH BIOLENCE.

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2. UNTIL APRIL 1977 (WHEN BOTSWANA DEFENSE FORCE (BDF) WAS FORMED), GOB EXPERIENCED THE SAME FEELING OF HELPLESSNESS IN THE FACE OF WHAT APPEARED TO BE UNMOTIVATED AND THEREFORE IRRESPONSIBLE VIOLENCE FROM RHODESIA. GOB ANALYSIS WAS TO RECOGNIZE THAT DEPLORABLE INCIDENTS OCCUR BOTH AS A RESULT OF CALCULATED MILITARY OPERATIONS (DUE TO INTENSE FEELINGS OF LOCAL COMMANDERS, AS DURING FEB 27 INCIDENT AT KAZUNGULA)

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AND HATREDS INSPIRED IN GUERRILLAS ("FREEDOM FIGHTERS")
WHO RESORT TO DESPERATE ACTS OF VIOLENCE STEMMING FROM
FRUSTRATION AS MUCH AS OVERZEALOUSNESS.

3. GOB HAS ATTEMPTED TO DISSUADE BOTH RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZED
PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT IN RHODESIA AND FANATICS ON BOTH
SIDES WHO ARE PROBABLY RESPONSIBLE TO NO ONE. PUBLICLY,
GOB MAKES CLEAR THROUGH PERIODIC HIGH-LEVEL PRONOUNCEMENTS
(E.G., PRESIDENT KHAMA'S SPEECHES) ITS CONDEMNATION OF
ARBITRARY VIOLENCE FROM WHATEVER QUARTER. PRIVATELY IT HAS
AT THE SAME TIME (A) URGED PATRIOTIC FRONT TO RESPECT GOB
TERRITORY, E.G., SPECIFICALLY ASKING THAT RAILROAD, GOB'S
LIFELINE, BE EXEMPTED FROM ATTACK; AND (B) USED BDF TO DISARM
AND INTERN GUERRILLAS ENCOUNTERED ON BOTSWANA TERRITORY.
THE INCENTIVE OF PF AND THEIR FOLLOWERS TO COMPLY IS GOB
THREAT (IF ONLY IMPLIED) TO WITHHOLD SUPPORT AND COOPERATION
IN USE OF GOB TERRITORY FOR TRANSIT OF RECRUITS. WITH INDICATIONS
THAT ONWARD MOVEMENT OF RECRUITS TO ZAMBIA HAS STOPPED,
WHETHER FOR FINANCIAL OR OTHER REASONS, THE STRENGTH OF THIS
GOB ARGUMENT HAS DIMINISHED. ON THE OTHER HAND, GOB AND RHODESIAN
RAILWAY AUTHORITIES BELIEVE THEY HAVE HAD CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS
IN DISCOURAGING ATTACKS AND, INDEED, RHODESIAN RAILWAY OFFICIALS
TOLD ME JUNE 27 THAT, WHILE THERE IS OCCASIONAL DISRUPTION
OF SERVICE DUE TO SUBVERSION, NO SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS HAVE
OCCURRED IN RECENT MONTHS.

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4. THE RELEVANCE OF GOB EXPERIENCE ABOVE WOULD SEEM TO
LIE IN ITS TWO-TIERED APPROACH. AS CONFLICT INTENSIFIES,
PUBLIC CONDEMNATIONS, EVEN IN THE MOST MOVING LANGUAGE,
REGRETTABLY LOSE EFFECTIVENESS. IN CASE OF US, OUR LEVERAGE
WOULD APPEAR TO CONSIST LARGELY OF IMPLIED THREATS TO EXCLUDE
VIOLENT PARTIES FROM NEGOTIATIONS, WHEREAS INCLUDING THEM IS
RECOGNIZED AS ESSENTIAL TO ACHIEVEMENT OF PEACEFUL SOLUTION.
PRIVATE MEANS OF DISSUASION DEPEND ON THE STAKE THE OFFENDING
PARTIES HAVE IN LISTENING TO US, IN OUR POWER TO GRANT OR
WITHHOLD THINGS OF INTEREST TO THEM. IF, FOR EXAMPLE, PF CADRES
RELIED ON US FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, OUR PUBLIC CONDEM-
NATIONS MIGHT HAVE SOME EFFECT. THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM IS OF
CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES INSPIRING FANATICAL BEHAVIOR ON BOTH
SIDES AND UNCONTROLLED BY REASON.

5. IN BRIEF, MY RECOMMENDATION WOULD BE (A) THAT WE PUBLICLY
CONDEMN SENSELESS KILLINGS AND OTHER VIOLENCE AT TIMES
SUFFICIENT TO LEAVE NO DOUBT ABOUT OUR DEEP REVULSION AGAINST
SUCH ACTIONS; (B) THAT WE USE FRONTLINE STATES TO CONVEY
THE DEPTH OF OUR FEELINGS AND DEVELOP RELATIONS WITH RESPON-
SIBLE ORGANIZED LIBERATION MOVEMENT LEADERSHIP THAT WILL GIVE
US GREATER ACCESS AND INFLUENCE THAN WE NOW HAVE. IF WE DECIDE,

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AS RECOMMENDED ABOVE, TO CONSULT WITH AND CONVEY OUR FEELINGS THROUGH GOB, WE SHOULD EXPECT IN TURN TO RECEIVE REMINDERS OF IMPORTANCE GOB ATTACHES TO ACQUIRING MEANS TO ASSURE ITS OWN SECURITY AS A FIRST STEP IN PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF INDIS-CRIMINATE VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS TO BOTSWANA. NORLAND UNQUOTE VANCE

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